

U.S. Department of Energy Standard Operating Procedures for Participation In the Department of Defense (DoD) Military Spouse Internship Program

Overview of the Program

The Military Spouse Intern Program is a pilot program established by DoD for the purpose of assisting deserving military spouses to develop skills that are portable across geographic and agency lines. This allows them to successfully transfer with their spouses to a new Permanent Change of Station (PCS) location. Occupations must be common across Federal agencies to help the military spouse find employment in the event of a PCS. The program is authorized by Public Law 111-84. More information on the program may be found at: <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/MilSpouseInternship.aspx> or 5 CFR, 315.612.

Program Elements

- DoD pays costs for salary, benefits, training and travel associated with training for first year through a Memorandum of Agreement and Annex.
- Military Spouses are hired into permanent DOE positions with career advancement opportunity by September 30, 2011, using a special hiring authority.
- Occupations must be portable across geographic and agency lines
- Can be used for positions at all levels as long as they meet program requirements
- Subject to CTAP, ICTAP, and Veteran's Preference
- Provide career development and training opportunities, at a minimum an IDP

Benefits to Your Organization

- Costs for employee salary, benefits, and training are paid by DoD for the first year
- Rapid hiring through military spouse hiring authorities
- 49% of military spouses have college degrees
- An additional 24% have one or more years of college, no degree
- Military spouses are experienced problem solvers who demonstrate flexibility

Benefits to the Military Spouse

- Offers portable employment in the event of spouse relocation
- Provides training and career advancement
- Offers stability to the military family unit

Examples of Eligible Occupations

- Professional
- Analytical positions that are not DOE specific
- Administrative
- IT

DOE Obligations Under the Program

- Within the first year, if the military spouse leaves the program, or in the event of PCS to another location where DOE does not have a site, the DoD reimbursement will be prorated based on the time the spouse was employed. The remaining funds will be returned to DoD.
- In the event of a military Permanent Change of Station (PCS) move to a location near a DOE site within the first year, DOE is responsible for providing assistance in placing the military spouse in a comparable DOE position, if possible. If no DOE position is available at the new location, the military spouse should be offered one of the following alternative options:
 - 1) Be placed on LWOP in the position of record for a limited time not to exceed one year, in order for the spouse to obtain employment in a comparable position; or
 - 2) The spouse may resign in accordance with the DoD intern agreement.

The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer will provide oversight and assistance to the losing office, DoD, and spouse, as needed to coordinate placement at the new location or implement one of the 3 alternative options. Local DOE Human Resources offices and Veteran Employment and Advisory Group members will be responsible for effecting the action and collaborating with the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer to facilitate this process in accordance with applicable law, regulation, and the MOA.

- After the first year and before the end of the third year, if a PCS move occurs to a location near a DOE site, at its discretion, DOE will provide assistance in locating a comparable DOE position at the new location. The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer will provide oversight and assist the losing office in coordinating possible DOE opportunities at the new location, or implementing one of the following options:
 - 1) Be placed on LWOP in the position of record for a limited time not to exceed one year, in order for the spouse to obtain employment in a comparable position; or
 - 2) They may resign in accordance with the DoD intern agreement.

Local DOE Human Resources Offices and Veteran Employment Coordinators will be responsible for effecting the action and collaborating with the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer to manage the process in accordance with applicable law, regulation, and the MOA.

- The Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer will be required to provide information on the success of the program to DoD for the annual report to Congress. Direct supervisors will provide input to the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer for the report.

Recruitment Process

The military spouse must apply toward a vacancy announcement, and be qualified through the competitive process. Managers should indicate on the SF-52 “Request for Personnel Action” that they wish to include eligible military spouses in the applicant pool. Human Resources Specialists will include information in the vacancy announcement relative to military spouse hiring authorities. If the best candidate happens to be an eligible military spouse, the hiring office will prepare the necessary paperwork and collaborate with the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer to request a funds transfer from DoD. Documentation needed for the DoD funding transfer request includes: 1) Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and Annex; 2) Position Description; and 3) Training/ Development Plan.

Preference

Military spouses do not receive preference unless they meet eligibility requirements for derived preference.

Military Spouse Hiring Authority

Appointments can be made through any military spouse hiring authority including the amendment to 5 C.F.R. § 315.612 allowing non-competitive appointments of certain military spouses. The Veteran Employment Opportunity Act of 1998 (VEOA) may be used to hire eligible military spouses with derived preference when recruiting from outside the DOE workforce for merit promotion positions. In the case of derived preference under VEOA, VEOA is the hiring authority that will be used.

Executive Order 13473, dated September 28, 2008, authorized the noncompetitive appointment of certain military spouses to competitive service positions. The Military Spouse Appointing Authority allows eligible spouses without status entrance into the competitive service without going through the external delegated examining process. Public notice is still required. Spouses must be qualified and do not receive selection priority over other qualified applicants. Veterans' preference does not apply to positions advertised via merit promotion or internal placement so any qualified, eligible spouse may be selected. This authority is used when filling competitive service positions on a temporary (not to exceed 1 year), term (more than 1 year but not more than 4 years), or permanent basis. The authority does not entitle spouses to preference over any other applicant. The non-competitive appointment must take place within 2 years of the PCS, and can only be used once for each PCS relocation.

When using the Military Spouse Appointing Authority, the appropriate hiring authority code must be entered into the Hiring Management system so actions can be tracked. If the spouse is not already on DOE's roles SF-50 actions should be processed using the following codes:

- For Permanent positions the Nature of Action Code (NOAC) Code is 101, and the Authority Code is LAM;
- For term appointments the NOAC Code is 108, and the Authority Code is LDM; and

- For temporary appointments the NOAC Code is 115, and the Authority Code is LCM.

Eligibility and additional information on military spouse hiring authorities can be found at: 5 C.F.R 315.612, <http://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/shams/index.aspx>. and <http://www.fedshirevets.gov/hire/hrp/qaspouse/index.aspx>.

Funding Transfer

Upon submission of the MOA by the employing office, DoD will confirm the appointment meets eligibility requirements and the funding will be transferred.

Badging

Badging will be done in accordance with the normal badging process for DOE employees.

Training Plan and IDP

Prior to hiring the military spouse, a draft training plan and/or IDP will be developed and provided by the employing office to DoD along with the MOA and Annex. Within 30 days of hire, the IDP will be finalized. The hiring manager is responsible for providing developmental assignments and training opportunities in line with the IDP. The manager will monitor progress of the military spouse in completing on-the-job, and other training goals.

Access to Training Systems

HC-20 will provide access to CHRIS Workflow to track and report all formal training. Access to the Skill Soft library of classes will be made available for training identified within the individual development plan and for needed competency development.

Transition to the Workplace

Hosting Managers are responsible for helping the military spouse to get started on a path that promotes success in learning and obtaining the skills-set and experience needed for career progression. Managers must provide work space and equipment such as: a phone, and computer. In addition, managers must also offer some of the following services so they achieve a better understanding of the office and organizational mission.

Orientation

The Office of Learning and Workforce Development (HC-20) will provide a group DOE orientation. For locations outside of Headquarters, managers should consult with their local training official to establish a similar orientation session or incorporate an overview of DOE in the office orientation session.

The hiring organization is responsible for introducing the Veteran to staff and providing an orientation to the office. It is important to provide summary information that will help them get started. This might include an overview of projects and services, office policies and procedures, and a review of the roles and responsibilities of the position.

Coaching and Mentoring

Hiring managers are responsible for identifying a coach to help the Veteran become acclimated to the office environment, learn to navigate DOE processes, and introduce them to peer networks. Coaching provides an enhanced level of mentoring and is an important step in preparing them for success. Care should be taken to match the participant with someone other than the direct supervisor who is interested in the day-to-day coaching and can accommodate this role within his/her work schedule. Whenever possible, an employee who has either served in the military, or has connections and can identify with the military spouse's needs, should be considered. If the employee is in a Headquarters office in Washington, DC, the Office of Learning and Workforce Development will work with that office to find an acceptable match, as needed.

Socializing Opportunities

Generations entering the workforce today have become accustomed to building networks by socializing with their peers. The military depend on these networks for day-to-day operations and survival. Hiring Managers should encourage interaction with the DOE Veteran employee groups as well as outside groups. Through these networks, they can share valuable information and establish contacts to help them do the job more efficiently. These opportunities further contribute to a greater level of job satisfaction, motivation, and retention for military spouses who are new to DOE.

Case File

The hiring manager is responsible for maintaining a case file containing any funding and training documentation associated with the military spouse placement that are outside of documents normally maintained within the OPF. Processing and recruitment documentation should be maintained by the servicing Human Resources office since this is a recruitment action. The records will be maintained and later disposed of in accordance with current Records Inventory Disposition requirements. In the event of employee transfer, the case file and other pertinent information is transferred to the gaining DOE manager.

Role of the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer

- Establish and maintain policies, procedures, and strategies for executing the Military Spouse Intern Program in accordance with regulation and merit system principles.
- Liaison with DoD and provide oversight for the program.
- Provide guidance and strategic direction to Departmental Elements on the use of military spouse hiring authorities.
- Periodically review practices of Departmental Elements for compliance with law and regulation.
- Provide training for HR professionals and hiring managers in the application of military spouse hiring authorities.

- Liaison with military spouse groups to assist hiring managers in attracting candidates.
- In the event of relocation, coordinate with HR professionals and hiring managers to determine the placement opportunities, or alternate accommodations in accordance with agency requirements on page 2.

Role of Human Resources (HR) Offices and DOE Veterans Employment Coordinators

- Execute all aspects of military spouse intern opportunities – marketing, recruitment, hiring, and retention.
- Serve as an advocate to promote military spouse recruitment, hiring, and retention within your area of responsibility.
- Collaborate with hiring managers to broadly promote career opportunities to military spouses. Whenever possible, include media such as: military organizations, news and job boards, websites, and once policy is developed, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn, etc.
- Provide technical guidance and assistance to managers on the effective usage of the military spouse hiring authorities in accordance with regulation, DOE policy, and established procedures.
- In the event of relocation, coordinate with the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer, HR professionals, and hiring managers from the potential gaining offices to determine placement opportunities, or implement alternative accommodations in accordance with agency requirements on page 2.
- Collect information from hiring managers within your area and provide annual feedback on the program to the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer.

Program Evaluation and Reporting

Annually, hiring managers will be asked to provide feedback on the program to the DOE Veteran Employment Program Manager within the Office the Chief Human Capital Officer and/or local human resources office. Information from the program evaluation will be used to determine where improvements should be made. Measures will include:

- Satisfaction of candidate referrals
- Ease of the DoD funding process
- Issues addressed timely and in a satisfactory manner
- If timely assistance was provided in the event of relocation
- Overall satisfaction with the program